

December 10, 1969

Dear Harold,

Enclosed is some copies of certain of my correspondence. You may keep them all but please do not pass them on. I am sending a copy of the Hoover letter to Dick and I don't mind if Gary gets one. You asked me for the Wecht letter but that must be kept between us. The same goes for the Panel mail but even more so. I think those are very important letters. Here is what I have gleaned from them plus a little background on them.

Start with the Carnes letters. There is a copy of the letter I sent him. I sent the identical letter to each doctor so I didn't bother making copies of each. In the letter I tried to sound as naive as I could hoping to get what I could from them in this way. The line "I do not know much about wound ballistics but I assume a path of fragments would indicate the exact path of a bullet." I know this is hogwash but I felt it would give the doctors the feeling that I would not appreciate what they disclosed to me. It is, in a way, a trap but I have no misgivings about using it.

The first one to answer was Russel Morgan. His answer to my first question is misleading and says nothing. They were not restricted but they were not told to either. Perhaps this is more in your line. What he says about the Neck X-rays is the clincher. As a radiologist, he was the one most qualified to read the X-rays and I have evidence that this was his function. I believe that the area in which he describes the fragments is too high to be along the path he describes but that is still questionable. The important thing is that he knew good and well that to produce these fragments, "the bullet" had to graze the spine. First of all, this completely and conclusively eliminates 399 from producing even a path through the neck; none of its jacket is missing or scrapped or scratched. Frazier's NO test. is explicit that none of the jacket was missing. Thus the Panel, which had 399 in its own hands, must have known this did not produce the neck wounds. Furthermore, I do not believe that a high velocity missile could have grazed the transverse process as he says without having chipped it or broken it off--the bone is weak there. Morgans letter brings out an important thing: the neck X-rays that the Panel saw were A-P views so they could not show the lateral displacement of the fragments. The statement that they appeared "well localized" to the vicinity of the process is therefore open to question.

The next man to answer me was Fisher. What a snake: I do not believe anything he told me and he fell right into my trap. His first paragraph is interesting but still says nothing. He says that the Panel was "charged" to report info contrary to the autopsy. Well, it did report such info but it did not label it as such. I know that Fisher is the least honorable of them (he interviewed Wecht, ect.) so it was his throat I chose to jump down. I wrote him a letter (if he answers I will send a copy) charging him with deceiving the people by not labeling much of their information "contrary". About the fragments, saying that they were "in a line between the two wounds" does not specify whether there was a "line" or path of fragments, or if there was just an area of fragments on a line. This is my trap. I said that thing about a "path" of fragments so he stuck in that bit about the line. Perhaps you can make more of it.

Back to Carnes. He puzzles me. I don't know if the first para. of his first letter is bull or truth. If it is true, then we must ask why this is not stated in the report. This is more your forte so you should get more out of it than I have. The second para. is something. "The distribution of the metal fragments was carefully described by

Dr. Russel Morgan at John Hopkins and incorporated in the report to the Attorney General." Well, well. You know what the report to the Attorney General says about the fragments: one ambiguous line. This is good reason to believe that the report which we are working with which was released by Clark is edited, that we do not have its original substance. Seeing the importance of this, I wrote Carnes again trying to get something more positive. I tried to keep the letter as innocent as possible but how innocent is one who suspects such editing? Apparently this was enough to turn his blood cold. Old "Dear Howard" Dr. Carnes became "Dear Mr. Roffman", one sentence letter, scribble the signature Mr. Hyde! I think his second letter speaks for itself.

This is it so far. It seems to me that each one has provided a different answer to my first question which doesn't say much for them. I am anxious to hear your view of these letters. There will probably be one more from Moritz who has been away on vacation but, according to his secretary, has just returned. As much as you can tell me, I would like to know how this compares with what the docs told you.

Much luck,

*Howard*